

REMARKS

Claims 21-40 are pending. Claims 21, 35 and 36-37 have been amended and claims 39 and 40 are new. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these claims.

Claims 21-34 and 36-38 were objected to due to typographical errors in claims 21 and 36 respectively. These errors have been corrected.

Claims 21-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Takidani (JP7-155343A) patent in view of the Fishman et al. (U.S. 5,007,937). The Examiner asserted that Takidani discloses each feature of the claimed invention with the exception of a liner and seal, that Fishman discloses a liner and seal and that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of these references.

Along with this Amendment, Applicants have submitted a supplemental translation of the Takidani reference. Although Takidani generally discloses a prosthetic socket with a vacuum system, Takidani also expressly states that the purpose of the vacuum device is to eliminate the need for a cloth or coating between the skin and socket (Par. 0013). Accordingly, a person of skill in the art would not have any reason or need to utilize the sock disclosed in Fishman with the socket disclosed in Takidani.

Nonetheless, Applicants have amended the independent claims to recite that the portion of the liner that covers the residual limb that is inserted into the socket is non-porous. This amendment is supported by, for example, par. [0103] of the present application, which corresponds to par. [0109] of the parent application. In contrast, Fishman discloses that only a small sealing member 12 of the sock is formed from a material that may be non-porous. Accordingly, the proposed combination does not disclose each feature of the claimed invention.

Moreover, a person of ordinary skill in the art would have no reason to further modify the proposed combination of Takidani and Fishman with such a non-porous liner because Takidani expressly teaches the importance of the limb stump fitting “tightly and securely” within the socket. (Par 0013). The claimed non-porous liner, in contrast, leaves a space between a portion of the socket and the liner as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, there would have been no reason to further modify the proposed combination of Takidani and Fishman.

Conclusion

The pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any additional questions, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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